

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4 – 10 and 12 - 19 are pending in the present application. Claims 3 and 11 were previously canceled, and claims 16 - 19 are newly added.

In section 4 of the Office Action, claims 1, 2 and 4 – 9 are objected to. Applicant amended claim 1 and believes that the substance of the objection has been addressed. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

In section 5 of the Office Action, claims 1, 2 and 4 – 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Applicant amended claim 1 and believes that the substance of the rejection has been addressed. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In section 7 of the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4 and 7 – 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,461,310 to Cheung et al. (hereinafter "the Cheung et al. patent"). This set of claims includes only one independent claim, namely claim 1. Applicant amended claim 1 to clarify a feature that is neither described nor suggested by the Cheung et al. patent.

Claim 1 provides for an automated test equipment (ATE). A device under test (DUT) is defined as (a) a first DUT core that represents a first functional unit of the DUT and (b) a second DUT core that represents a second functional unit of the DUT. The ATE includes, *inter alia*, means for programming an ATE-port with a program for testing the first DUT core. The program is independent of a program for testing the second DUT core.

The Cheung et al. patent is directed toward an ATE system. Test data is loaded into an individual pin slice circuit in a vertical word fashion, such that all of the bits of the vertical word correspond to the individual pin, allowing characteristics of an individual pin test sequence to be varied independently of other pins (Abstract). FIG. 2 of the Cheung et al. patent illustrates the vertical word structure. At col. 2, lines 1 – 14, the

Cheung et al. patent discloses several strategies relating to a group of pins, and more particularly, a group of pins "that are to receive the same test signals" (col. 2, line 4), or groupings based on a signal level, e.g., TTL or ECL. The Cheung et al. patent also discloses a use of a program to control circuitry that applies voltages or signals to, or receive voltages or data from, pins of a device under test (col. 1, lines 25 – 37).

Applicant respectfully submits that the disclosure of the Cheung et al. patent, as it relates to vertical word structures, and groupings of pins that receive the same signal or that require a particular signal level, and a program for applying/receiving voltages or data to/from pins, is not descriptive of the recitals of claim 1. The Cheung et al. patent does not disclose a strategy for testing a DUT core, or of a program for testing a DUT core, much less of a dependence or independence between programs for testing different DUT cores. Thus, the Cheung et al. patent neither expressly nor inherently describes means for programming an ATE-port with a program for testing the first DUT core, wherein the program is independent of a program for testing the second DUT core, as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the Cheung et al. patent does not anticipate claim 1.

Claims 2, 4 and 7 – 9 depend from claim 1. By virtue of this dependence, claims 2, 4 and 7 – 9 are also novel over the Cheung et al. patent.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 102(b) rejection of claims 1, 2, 4 and 7 – 9.

In section 8 of the Office Action, claims 5, 6, 10 and 12 – 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Cheung et al. patent. In this set of rejected claims, two claims are independent, namely claims 10 and 15. Applicant amended claims 10 and 15 in a manner similar to that of claim 1.

Above, Applicant explained that the Cheung et al. patent does not anticipate claim 1. Applicant also submits that whereas the Cheung et al. patent does not include a

disclosure of a program for testing a DUT core, or of a dependence or independence between programs for testing different DUT cores, it does not suggest means for programming an ATE-port with a program for testing the first DUT core, wherein the program is independent of a program for testing the second DUT core, as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over the Cheung et al. patent.

Claims 5 and 6 depend from claim 1. By virtue of this dependence, claims 5 and 6 are patentable over the Cheung et al. patent.

Claim 10, as mentioned above, is independent, and includes a recital similar to that of claim 1. Thus, claim 10 is patentable over the Cheung et al. patent for reasons similar to that of claim 1.

Claims 12 – 14 depend from claim 10. By virtue of this dependence, claims 12 - 14 are patentable over the Cheung et al. patent.

Claim 15, as mentioned above, is independent, and includes a recital similar to that of claim 1. Thus, claim 15 is patentable over the Cheung et al. patent for reasons similar to that of claim 1.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claims 5, 6, 10 and 12 – 15.

Applicant amended claims 1, 10 and 15 to clarify a feature that is neither described nor suggested by the art of record. Applicant also amended claims 1, 10 and 15, as well as most of the dependent claims to improve grammar, provide an antecedent basis for terms, and provide consistent terminology. None of the amendments is intended to narrow the meaning of any term of the claims, and as such, the doctrine of equivalents should be available for all of the elements of all of the claims.

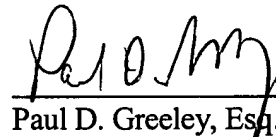
Applicant added claims 16 - 19 to even further provide the claim coverage that Applicant appears to deserve based on the prior art that was cited by the Examiner. A favorable consideration that also results in the allowance of claim 16 is earnestly solicited.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims presented in this application patentably distinguish over the prior art. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and that this application be passed to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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